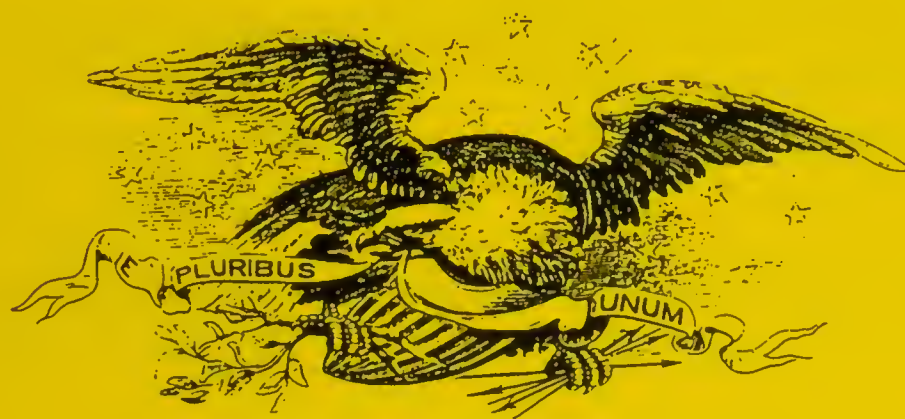


THE BRASHER BULLETIN

Newsletter of the Society of
Private and Pioneer Numismatics
S. P. P. N.



Vol. 9 No. 4

A NEWLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF PRIVATE AND PIONEER NUMISMATICS (S.P.P.N)

The Society of Private and Pioneer Numismatics is a collector-based organization devoted to the education and enjoyment of the private and pioneer gold coinage of the western and southeastern United States. Members of the Society are also collectors and students of small denomination "fractional" gold coinage of California, gold souvenir tokens, and western mining or banking scrip.

Dues are \$10.00 per year with an additional \$5.00 fee for all new members. Further membership information may be obtained by writing to the address listed below. If you would like to become a member, please fill out the last page of the bulletin and send to the address below.

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Society of Private and Pioneer Numismatics
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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS.....	3
By Donald H. Kagin, Ph.D.	
MINUTES OF THE S.P.P.N. 1997 NEW YORK MEETING.....	4
PIONEER AUCTION RESULTS & ACTIVITY 1997.....	5
By E.J. Vallier	
JUSTICES ALLOW SALVAGE OF SHIP DURING APPEAL.....	6
By Associated Press	
GOLD RUSH TOWNS - FAIRPLAY, COLORADO, By Charles Black.....	7
COLOMA, CALIFORNIA,By Susan Guhm.....	8
KAGIN'S GET PCGS SLABBED INGOT.....	10
EMPIRE MINE: STATE HISTORICAL PARK.....	11
By Ron Warr	
ALASKA COLLECTION.....	12
By Associated Press	
IT WAS PROVISIONAL, NOW IT EXISTS B.G. 607.....	13
By Jack Totheroh	
CALIFORNIA SMALL DENOMINATION GOLD: AUCTION SALES HISTORY-Part 2.....	16
By Jack Totheroh	
WHAT IS IT?.....	20
By Anthony Terranova	

Editors Observations

Dear Members,

We wanted to publish information concerning the upcoming sale of some important pioneer coins in the Pitman sale this week, but unfortunately we have so much information already to present to that we wanted to disseminate this information as soon as possible. What is delightful is that we have a number of very interesting articles in several areas of pioneer coinage.

I've been delighted by the response of membership, both in terms of their feedback on our first efforts as editor of the Brasher Bulletin and in providing us with interesting historical information and timely information concerning our favorite field.

If you have never met Mr. Jack Tothorh and you are a student of California Small Denomination Gold you are truly missing an opportunity to talk to one of the most knowledgeable individuals on the subject. Jack is member No. 5 S.P.P.N. and 83 years young. In our haste to publish the last issue we neglected to include the cover letter on his California Denomination Gold Auction Sales History. Last issue featured BG#101 and BG #701 including his Rarity Rating Revision for Fractional Gold. This issue includes the cover letter and results of BG #201, #420, and #801. We are also publishing his article on BG 607, "It Was Provisional-Now It Exists".

In this issue we have published articles on Coloma and the Empire Mine in conjunction with the California Gold Discovery Sesquicentennial events listed on the back page.

Next addition at the strong recommendation of member Tony Terranova we will be going to a higher quality cover paper similar to those of auction catalogs. We believe with the increase in membership that we can afford this addition outlay. If you have not paid your 1997 dues please do so now, they are just \$10.00.

On a personal note, I have been asked by American Numismatic Association to consider teaching a course on Pioneer coins at the ANA summer seminar July 11-17. I question whether there is enough non-technical information to cover in one week or if there is enough interest in people attending this seminar in July. If there is any of you that would be interested in attending a seminar like this or have any ideas for what to include, I'd be very interested in feedback prior to making my decision. Please write to me at the enclosed address or give me a call toll free at 888-852-4467.

Thank you.

Donald H. Kagin, Ph.D.

MINUTES OF THE S.P.P.N. 1997 NEW YORK MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Jim Vallier as Don Kagin (who chaired the meeting) rushed from a hectic morning on the Bourse Floor. Dealers A.M. Kagin, Tom Hallenbeck, Robert Rhue and Bob Campbell were present along with old and new members of S.P.P.N. Members of the Numismatic Press were also in attendance.

Topics discussed were the change over in publishing duties from Dave Showers to Don Kagin. Kagin stated our current goal is to increase membership and to upgrade and expand the size and scope of the Brasher Bulletin. It is planned that the articles published in the Brasher Bulletin eventually will be combined into book form. This would be similar to the Gobrecht Journal published by the Liberty Seated Collectors Club. Once again members were encouraged to submit articles for publication. The Central America and Brother Jonathan shipwreck salvage news was updated (no change). Photographs of the "Wells Fargo" gold nugget collection were displayed. The Arco First Mill Product, a rare Price & Co. Ingot and a Blake Owyhee Ingot were also available for viewing.

Newly elected ANA Governor Mr. Bob Campbell from Utah was the keynote speaker. His talk was on the history of Mormon Coinage and the detection of Counterfeit Mormon coins. The Mark Hoffman forgeries and the Mormon restrikes were also discussed. The Society would like to thank Mr. Campbell for his excellent and very informative talk.

The meeting was adjourned and the next meeting scheduled for the Portland Oregon 1998/ANA. We have a promise from the notable John J. Ford that he will be the keynote speaker. This convention is on the West Coast and with Mr. Ford speaking should be attended by all serious members of the S.P.P.N.



PIONEER AUCTION RESULTS & ACTIVITY 1997

TEMPLETON REID GOLD SET FETCHES \$750,000

A complete, three-piece Templeton Reid gold coin set, comprising \$2.50, \$5 and \$10 denominations all dated 1830, recently fetched just over \$750,000 for the numismatic investment firm of Hancock & Harwell.

According to firm partner Jack Hancock, the coins range in condition from EF to AU. The \$5 and \$10 specimens are formerly of the Virgil Brand Collection, which was sold at auction in 1984.

The set will now become part of the private Duke's Creek Collection of Georgia gold coins.

As noted by the Red Book, Templeton Reid was a jeweler and gunsmith in Milledgeville, Ga. In 1830, he opened a mint in Gainesville and produced the first privately-issued circulating gold coins in the United States. His mint operated less than three months and produced only about 1,600 coins.

Current population statistics list just 24 known examples of the \$2.50 and six examples each of the \$5 and \$10 coins, reports Hancock & Harwell. There are just three known sets of Templeton Reid gold: one in the Smithsonian Institution and two in private hands. Of the latter two, the set sold by Hancock & Harwell is the finer.

Hancock & Harwell, which has been in business for 21 years, specializes in rare Georgia coinage and caters to collectors and investors at all levels, as well as museums.

Prior to the sale of the Templeton Reid gold, the firm acquired and sold a rare 1861-D half eagle in MS-63 condition. That coin was struck by Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

1855 KELLOGG \$50 REALIZES \$156,500

The highlight of the ANA Auction in New York was the sale of the Kellogg fifty dollar Proof 62NGC 1855 Kellogg & Co. the "King of Territorial Gold Coins" was purchased by Kagins for a major pioneer enthusiast. It's pedigree is Ex George Rice of Detroit, Virgil Brand Collection, William Forrester Dunham Collection, William D. Waltman Collection (B Max Mehl 6/45), Lot 37; Amon Carter Collection (Stacks 1/84), Lot 1149.

The Brasher Bulletin would like to recommend to its members several auction firms of Western Americana.

Fred Holabird Americana
14040 Perlite Dr.
Reno, Nevada 89511

Phone: (707) 851-0836 Fax: (702) 851-3432

Mr. Hollabird recently sold the Schilling Collection in three parts of New Mexico and Nevada Trade Tokens.

Gypsyfoot Enterprises, Inc.
P.O. Box 583
Helena, MT 59604

Phone: (406) 449-8076 Fax: (406) 443-8514

Offering a diverse selection of Autographs, Tokens, Currency & Scrip; Photographs, Misc. Documents in Various Categories, Mining, Postal & Railroad Ephemera, Stocks & Bonds, Western Americana.

SanJose, California 1st Annual Western
Americana Antique Show & Auction
P.O. Box 1334
Roseville, CA 95678

Phone: (916) 781-6949 Fax: (916) 781-6989

JUSTICES ALLOW SALVAGE OF SHIP DURING APPEAL

The Supreme Court refused yesterday to stop a private company from salvaging a 132-year old shipwreck near the Northern California coast while the court decides whether the company or state owns salvage rights.

The ship, known as the Brother Jonathan, sank 132 years ago off Crescent City with great loss of life and, some say, millions of dollars worth of gold. In its application, California sought a stay of a lower court ruling that gave salvage rights to Deep Sea Research of Diamond Bar.

The state wanted the justices to stop Deep Sea Research from salvaging the ship or selling artifacts from it. Yesterday, the justices denied the application with out comment.

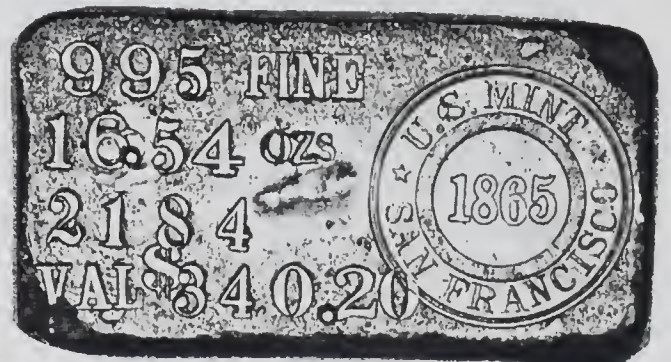
In an earlier decision, the court agreed to use the case to decide how courts should handle disputes between states and treasure hunters. Most of the Brother Jonathan's 250 passengers and crew drowned when the ship sank en route to Puget Sound from San Francisco.

California's appeal was supported in friend-of-the-court briefs submitted by 15 other states and coalition of groups dedicated to protecting historic shipwrecks. The brief submitted on behalf of the 15 states told the justices that the lower court rulings in the California case "made it infinitely more difficult for the states to manage historic, abandoned vessels on their property."

Those states are Alabama, Alaska, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

The other friend-of-the-court brief said a Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruling in the California case "will return the law of historic shipwrecks to an era of confusion and unnecessary litigation, jeopardizing the ability of the states to protect these valuable historic resources." The justices were told their ruling could affect more than 5,000 such shipwrecks.

San Francisco Chronicle
July 4, 1997
Associated Press



FAIRPLAY, COLORADO

Fairplay, Colorado is one of the oldest and most historical cities in Colorado. It is located approximately eighty-five miles southwest of Denver in the South Park district of Park County, Colorado. The South Park district also encompasses other notable gold mining camps such as Alma, Buckskin Joe, Hamilton (where Dr. John Parsons of Parsons & Co. minted \$2½ and \$5 pioneer gold pieces in 1861), Silver Heels, and Tarryall.

Fairplay was founded in the summer of 1859 by a group of disgruntled gold prospectors who had been rebuked by the possessive attitude of the Tarryall, Colorado mining camp settlers. The settlement was named for the treatment that the gold miners would receive as opposed to the treatment that they had received at Tarryall, which was sarcastically nicknamed "Grab All."

During the 1860's the town became the supply and "Saturday night" center for all the rich mining camps in the South Park district. Its population in its heyday was estimated as high as 8,000. As gold placer activity faded in the late 1860's, Fairplay continued as a main point for gold dredge mining operations in the South Park district which continued until the mid-1920's.

In 1959, exactly one hundred years following the discovery of gold in the South Park district, "South Park City" was established in Fairplay and opened to the public. South Park City is an accurate representation of a gold mining town of the 1860-1900 era. It contains thirty-four authentic buildings (actual cabins and business houses) which were relocated from Buckskin Joe, Hamilton, Horseshoe, Leavick, and other gold mining camps in the South Park district. The restored buildings in South Park City contain in excess of 60,000 artifacts in period room settings and exhibits illustrating the professions, trades, and industries which contributed to life in a nineteenth-century Colorado gold mining town.



TOWN SET TO MARK 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF DISCOVERY OF GOLD

As morning light illuminates the tops of the trees, a pair of ducks fly upriver while an artist sits on the west bank of the American River, sketching a scene of contentment.

A family of five peeks in through the front door of the old one-room schoolhouse, and I stand on the shoulder of Highway 49- Main Street in Coloma- and see in my mind's eye the approach of the wild riders.

A half-dozen, bearded miners- handsome, muscular men - come riding at full gallop while crowds scatter, scream and cheer this scene of wild abandon. Some riders rein in their steeds, jump off and war-hoop their way into the closest saloon. Others whirl their horses around and dash off again, hurtling past the crowd only inches away.

This scene, which occurred in Coloma in 1849, was described by eyewitness Charles B. Gillespie, a gentleman from the east. Safe from a historical distance of 148 years, it all seems high-spirited, romantic and so very western.

The scene Gillespie described took place near the site of perhaps the most significant event in California history - the discovery of gold. The first glittering grains had been spotted a little over a year earlier, on January 24, 1848, by John Marshall at nearby Sutter's Mill. Next year, Coloma will be the starting point for California's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the event.

The Coloma state park brings back early times of 1849 through special "living history days" that recreate everything described by Gold Rush-era visitors but the reckless mayhem and skunky aromas of unwashed miners.

During those special-event days the area hums with activity: 49er cooking (prospector meals, not tailgating parties);

dollmaking; quilting; tin-, black- and gunsmithing; rope making; gold panning; spinning; weaving; Native American trade demonstrations and sawmill demonstrations, all taking place around a tent city and wagon train encampment.

Some visitors mix old and new: rafting the river, taking a leisurely tour of town in a horse-drawn carriage, staying overnight in a house built in 1852 - now the Coloma Country Inn - and then going hot-air ballooning above Coloma.

Although all the buildings of 1848 or 1849 are gone - having fallen victim to fire, neglect and vandalism - a few are left from the 1850s. The earliest are Bekeart's Gun Shop and the Odd Fellows Hall, both built in 1854. At the south end of town, some of the brick walls and all four iron doors of Bell's Store built in 1855 still stand.

At the north end of town are the only two remaining buildings from Coloma's Chinatown: the Wah Hop Herb and Dry Goods Store, furnished as it was in the 1850s, and the Man Lee store, which now houses and exhibit of gold mining techniques and a replica of a mining tunnel.

Two churches from the 1850s still stand on the outskirts of town. Before their construction, worship services were held in any available shelter. If held in a house or cramped saloon, the crowd simply spilled out the door and into the yard. According to Gillespie, the preacher's closing prayer was frequently preceded with the announcement, "There will be divine service in this house next Sabbath - if, in the meantime, I hear of no new diggin's!"

Not far from downtown is Sutter's Mill. In 1847, Captain John Sutter, who had established his fort on a hill near the American River eight years earlier, sent

John Marshall upstream to find a good site for a water-powered sawmill. Marshall chose a wide valley surrounded by hills of harvestable timber.

About a dozen men were hired, the mill was built and was about to go into operation. On January 24, 1848, during one of Marshall's inspections of the mill, he spotted the glint of yellow from a gold nugget no bigger than half a pea. In that moment, everything changed.

The sawmill standing on the site today is built with heavy timbers and looks old and well-used, but it is actually a replica constructed in 1966. The original mill fell into ruin many years ago. Some of its hand-hewn timbers were discovered in the riverbed in 1947, and are on display nearby.

The replica mill runs by electricity rather than water. A portion of the mill race - the trench that ran under the original mill, where Marshall spotted that first pellet of gold - can be seen north of the mill site.

As in many Gold Rush towns, some of the most poignant reminders of the past are found in the cemeteries. Pioneer Cemetery on Cold Springs Road, one of three cemeteries in town, is where one finds the oldest remnants of Coloma.

The oldest tombstone marks the grave of Ezra Schooley, a livery stable owner who died in Coloma in 1850. There are older graves here, perhaps from as early as 1848, but their wood markers disintegrated long ago, leaving the grave unmarked and its occupant long forgotten.

Other tombstones mark the graves of Nathan Hawk, a member of the Mormon Battalion that came to California in 1846; several members of the "Coloma Greys," a group of Coloma-based Confederate soldiers; Annie Cox Markham Thole, divorced wife of poet Edwin Markham; and frugal, hard-working Nancy Gooch. A slave who crossed the plains by wagon in 1850, Gooch was freed when California joined the Union as a

free state that same year. For almost 20 years she cooked for miners and diligently saved every spare penny. When she had amassed \$700, she bought the freedom of her son, Andrew Monroe, and his wife Sarah, who then journeyed from Missouri to Coloma.

In 1903, Gooch's grandson, Pearley Monroe, began General Blacksmithing and Horseshoeing, which is still in operation today making iron implements both for practical use in the park and for sale in the visitors' center.

By 1942, he was one of Coloma's biggest landowners. That year the State of California purchased the gold discovery site and much of the town from him.

John Marshall, who died in 1885, has the area's largest grave marker. The Marshall Monument, dedicated by several thousand people in 1890, marks Marshall's grave site, dug by his friend, Andrew Monroe, on a hilltop overlooking the Coloma Valley. His statue atop the monument points to the discovery site on the river below.

IF YOU GO...

GETTING THERE: Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park is on Highway 49, eight miles north of Placerville and 20 miles south of Auburn. Contact the park for maps and brochures: Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, P.O. Box 265, Coloma CA 95613; phone: (916) 622-3470; fax: (916) 622-3472.

LODGING: The Coloma Country Inn is the only bed and breakfast in Coloma. A full breakfast and afternoon refreshment accompany the overnight stay (\$90 with a shared bath, \$110 with a private bath). The inn, a house dating back to 1852, is located on five acres within the state park and has a rose garden, gazebo, pond and shaded porch. Hot air ballooning is also offered by the inn. Contact: 345 High Street, P.O. Box 502, Coloma, CA 95613; phone: (916) 622-6919.

CAMPING: Coloma Resort on the American River has accommodations ranging from tent and RV sites (\$26.50 for two) to tent cabins (\$39) and motel units (\$75). Contact: P.O. Box 516, 6921 Mt. Murphy Rd., Coloma, CA 95613; phone: (916) 621-2267.

DINING: Options here are limited. The state park has spacious picnic grounds, and food and beverages may be purchased at the convenience store just a few hundred feet south on Highway 49. The Argonaut Cafe, the only cafe in the park, offers reasonably priced sandwiches, chips, pies, beverages (including sarsaparilla) and candy.

STATE PARK: Be sure to visit the park's visitor center on Bridge Street to pay the day-use fee of \$5 per vehicle and to get information on the region's history. Also check at the visitor center for the times for demonstration of the full-size replica of Sutter's Mill.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Gold Rush Days and the National Gold Panning Championships are Oct. 4 and 5; Christmas in Coloma is Dec. 14. Beginning celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the discovery of gold are Jan. 25, 1998.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Plentiful information on the park, special events, phone numbers for surrounding counties' visitor bureaus, Coloma's cemeteries, and both the national and World Gold Panning Championships can be found on the internet at www.windjammer.net/users/isg/coloma/.

FURTHER READING: A great book to read about the Gold Rush before your visit is J.S. Holliday's entertaining and highly acclaimed "The World Rushed In" (Simon & Schuster). One of the best concise histories (47 pages) of Coloma and John Marshall available at the park visitor center is "The Gold Discovery: James Marshall and the California Gold Rush."

By Susan Guhm

KAGIN'S GETS PCGS SLABBED INGOT

The first California gold ingot to be certified and graded by the Professional Coin Grading Service is an 1849 Moffat & Co. \$16 piece submitted by Don Kagin, Ph.D., president of Kagin's in Tiburon, Calif. It was graded AU-55.

Kagin said the decision by PCGS to handle ingots for grading was the result of a discussion he had with David Hall, John Dannreuther and Rick Montgomery.

"We agreed they circulated as money," Kagin said. Once that was decided, the ingot was submitted and a PCGS holder was modified to hold it.

Kagin said the suggestion to slab this \$25,000 rarity came from Don Lynch of San Jose Coins, who ultimately purchased the piece. He had asked if the grading services handled these California items and that got the ball rolling.

For more information, contact Kagin's at 98 Main St., Tiburon, CA 94920-2566. The telephone number is (415) 435-2601.

The Professional Coin Grading Service may be reached at P.O. Box 9458, Newport Beach, CA 92658.

-Numismatic News

THE EMPIRE MINES: State Historic Park

Within two years of James W. Marshall's discovery of gold in 1848, great hordes of '49ers had panned out most of California's gold-bearing streambeds. Only a few miners had any real idea of the quantities of gold that were locked beneath the surface of the Sierra in sheet-like veins of quartz. But in June of 1850, George McKnight discovered a gold-bearing quartz outcropping about a mile from here (near St. Patrick's church in downtown Grass Valley). Then, in October of 1850, a lumberman named George Roberts found flecks of gold in a surface outcropping of quartz where the park's main parking lot is now.

Hearing the news, hundreds of miners flocked to this area to stake out the customary 40-foot by 30-foot placer claims. They soon found, however, that they lacked the skills necessary to tunnel deep into the earth. Chipping and blasting rock was hard and dangerous work. Cave-ins were frequent, and tunnels were continually being flooded by underground springs. By 1851, the land was perforated with hundreds of "coyote holes" - vertical holes in the ground, 20 to 40 feet deep, that resembled water wells. Miners were lowered into these holes in buckets. George Roberts, like many others, became discouraged and sold his claims into a single operation to be known as the Ophir Hill Mine. In 1852, the Ophir Hill Mine property was purchased by John Rush, who changed the name to Empire Quartz Hill Company.

Ownership of the mine continued to change rather rapidly during the 1850s and 1860s. Surface structures and processing plants were repeatedly torn down, rebuilt, and modernized. The Empire Mine prospered after capitalist William Bourn gained a controlling interest in 1869, but his death in 1874 was followed by a slump in production.

In 1879, Bourn's son, William, Jr., reached the age of 22 and took over management of the mine. At that time, all indications

pointed to the mine's imminent closure. Many believed that profitable operations were impossible below the 1,200-foot level, but young Bourn reorganized the company and boldly pushed several shafts much deeper. For several years, operating expenses were barely paid, but by 1884 the operation was making a profit once again.

Much of the Empire's success was the work of Bourn's cousin, George W. Starr. Starr began work in the Empire Mine at the age of 19 and, in six years (1881 to 1887), worked his way from mucker to mine superintendent. In 1893, he gave up his position to join the famous mining engineer, John Hays Hammond, in the gold mines of South Africa. Then, on his way to Alaska in 1898, Starr stopped in San Francisco to visit his cousin. Bourn persuaded Starr to return to the Empire, where he served as superintendent until 1929.

The most important factor in the success of hard rock mining in California was the immigration of skilled miners from Cornwall, England, where hardrock tin and copper mining had been carried on for over a thousand years. These Cornishmen brought experience, skill, and the latest technological advances in mining equipment. One of these inventions, "the Cornish pump," was so efficient that pumps of this kind continued to be used until the early 1930s. By 1890, the population of Grass Valley was reportedly 85 percent Cornish. And because every Cornish miner seemed to have an unlimited supply of relatives to recommend for every mine job, and since many of the miners wanted to undertake the hard, dangerous work only with trusted friends and relatives, the Cornishmen soon received the nickname, "Cousin Jacks." To this day, their brand of humor and other cultural traditions, including food specialties such as "pasties: and saffron buns, continue to give a distinctive flavor to life in the Grass Valley area.

Before World War I, Bourn and Starr installed many mining improvements, and the Empire became famous as one of the most progressive and best managed gold mines in America. Even to its final day, however, mules were used as a source of power to haul rock to the main mine shaft where it could be hosed to the surface. The mules were well cared for and lived in snug, underground barns until they became too old to work.

In 1929, Bourn, in failing health, sold the Empire to Newmont Mining Corporation. During the same year, Newmont also purchased a controlling interest in the North Star Mine. The combined apparition of these mines was then known as Empire-Star Mines Company Ltd. Gold from the Empire-Star not only helped to keep the Newmont Corporation solvent during the early 1930s but made the Great Depression something the residents of Grass Valley "only read about in the papers."

The Empire's prosperity continued until World War II, when the War Production Board halted nonessential industries, such as gold mining. The mine reopened in 1945, but the price of gold remained fixed at its 1934 level of \$35 an ounce, providing little profit. By the early 1950s, inflation had driven the cost of mining to \$45 per ounce of gold. The company could not pay the miners enough to feed their families. Consequently, on July 5, 1956, the miners went on strike. For several months thereafter, while the strike continued, the big underground water pumps remained in operation in anticipation of the miners' return. The removal of underground mining equipment began in January 1957. On May 28, the last pump was shut down and the mine finally closed. Its equipment was sold at auction in September 1959. By then, total gold production by the Empire Mine had reached nearly six million ounces. (More than two billion dollars worth of gold at today's prices.)

The great pumps that once lifted a million gallons of water a day are silent now, and the mine is flooded 180 vertical feet below

the surface. Gone are the hundreds of Cornish miners who dug 367 miles of tunnels - some of which angled downward into the earth some 11,000 feet, nearly a full, vertical mile below the surface. Gone are the great hoists and cables that enabled the miners to travel thousands of feet down the shaft. Gone are the mules that pulled the ore trains through the tunnels. But the gold is still there, awaiting a time when deep, hardrock gold mining might again be profitable.

By Ron Warr

ALASKA GOLD: LIFE ON THE NEW FRONTIER

The California Historical Society is not only celebrating and preserving history these days but also making some itself as the society marks its 75th anniversary this month. The organization, which moved to new space in the Yerba Buena Gardens area in March, kicks off its anniversary year with a new exhibition, "Alaska Gold: Life on the New Frontier," which tells the story of Wilfred and Edmund McDaniel, California brothers who joined the 1898 Alaska gold rush. Wilfred brought along a view camera and tripod, which he used to document the life and culture of the gold miners and native Alaskans around Nome.

The exhibition includes letters, diaries, mining artifacts and utensils from the McDaniel family collection. The society will sponsor a number of talks and special tours during the run of the exhibition. It's a golden opportunity to learn about history.

Time: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, Thursday-Ending January 3

Location: California Historical Society, 678 Mission St., San Francisco

Phone #: (415) 357-1848, ext. 14

IT WAS PROVISIONAL - NOW IT EXISTS
Jack Totheroh, S.P.P.N. #5

BG607 is for real. Robert Lecce had his specimen along with the accompanying papers to show me at the Superior Auction in June, 1997 just prior to the Long Beach show. It is an exciting story which leaves some unanswered questions.

The auction house, where Bob acquired the coin, had purchased an old desk among other articles from an estate. In examining the desk, adhering to the wood above one of the drawers, a taped paper was found which included the coin in its holder and two other slips of paper (see accompanying sheet):

1. Round California Gold Dollar of 1857.

The only one of this date known.

Excessively Rare -

Samuel W. Comstock Owner-

2. 1857 . Cal. Gold Dollar , Round

Liberty Head 13 stars date on Reverse -
(Elder Sale)

Only known piece of this date Round

Cost \$60.00 2815.

3. "Sinite of Potasiam" - (Poison)

Dip a Gold Coin into it for just a Second,
& it will be as clean as minted - S.W.C.

This raises questions for which you may have the answers:

- 1a. Do we include the year 1857 in Period 1 or Period 2?

- 1b. Now that we know 1857 exists as a mint date for Calif.

Small Denomination Gold what about the 1857 Deriberpe octagonal dollar shown on plate #XVIII of "The American Numismatological Journal" by Montroville Wilson Dickeson, M.D, 1859; Coin Collectors Journal, IX:36-41, March 1884; Ed Lee, "California Gold Quarters, Halves & Dollars, 1932, #32 'reported' and R.H. Burnie, "Small California and Territorial Gold Coins", 1955, #31, page 54 - reported. Were they all in error? Neither edition of Kenneth Lee or Doering mentions the coin but Breen-Gillio on page 44 states 'no rumor of the 1857 dated piece. Either a typographical error or a misreading of a badly worn or ex-jewelry specimen.' With the finding of BG607 perhaps this too may be re-discovered.

- 1c. Samuel W. Comstock - is he a relative of Henry Comstock the Comstock Lode was named? What was Samuel's history and background?

- 2a. Was Comstock alive when his collection was sold by Thomas Elder in January 1935? The sale, which was well represented with C.S.D.G., did not include the 1857 round dollar. It remained hidden in the desk. This leads to the probability that the auction was of his estate by his heirs. Does anyone know?

- 2b. Did Comstock have any heirs? Surely he could not have forgotten his valuable coin, but did anyone else know where he had hidden it?

- 2c. In the Comstock Collection there were some coins purchased at the Elder - Lawrence Sale, July 1929. Lot 2815

was not among them. The slip of paper accompanying the coin holder indicates Comstock paid \$60.00 for the coin at an Elder sale. Elder conducted 294 auction sales from 1905 to 1940. Lot #2815 probably was in one of those sales prior to 1929. The best resource for a search would probably be the Stacks' collection of numismatic literature and catalogs in New York City. What a great verification if someone can find the source of lot #2815!

- 3a. "Sinite of Potasium" - was this a colloquial usage for Potassium Cyanide or was Comstock a poor speller and unfamiliar with chemistry?

My description of the coin would be as follows: The coin is uncirculated with no evidence of nicks or scratches. It retains some of its original luster, It is far superior to the obverse illustrated in Doering and Breen-Gillio. The obverse die is that of Frontier-Deviercy, BG 601, with 13 small, five point stars. The bust points to the 1st star, The reverse, which does not appear in either Doering or Breen-Gillio, has CALIFORNIA GOLD around and outside of the wreath. The GO in GOLD is weak. 1 DOLLAR 1857 is within the wreath. The 1 of the year is below the O in DOLLAR; the 8 is to the left of the first L; the 5 is between the two L's; the 7 is between the L and A. The top of the 7 slants down to the left.

So what is the uncirculated BG607 worth? Lecce says it is not for sale. He has finally succumbed to being a collector of C.S.D.G. Is it worth the \$82,500 price paid for the 1943d copper cent in 1996, or is it worth the \$49,500 paid for the AU58? 1943s copper cent sold at auction by Superior in June of this year. What about the AU55 1943s copper cent, lot #5919 offered at the Heritage A.N.A. New York Auction? When compared by age, rarity, condition, history and romance the California 1857 round dollar clearly comes out on top. Because it is unknown and unheralded to the vast majority of collectors, will it remain undervalued in comparison?

Since this was written I bid on some auction catalogs offered by Remy Bourne in his Public Auction #6 and told him of my search for an Elder catalog with lot #2815 containing a round 1857 California dollar. He found it in the June 22, 1935 Elder, Foster Collection Sale after searching through almost 100 Elder catalogs. That answers questions 2a: Yes, he was alive when he sold his collection, and no it was not his heirs who sold it. 2c: If the handwritten prices realized is correct, he paid \$11.75. Elder stated the cost of #2815 had been \$60. It probably had been purchased sometime in the "roaring twenties", whether privately or at auction we do not know.

This still leaves the questions of Samuel Comstock's heritage to be answered. Was he related to John Hurd Comstock whose collection was sold by Lyman Low in his auction of June 13, 1903? Was John Hurd the father and Henry the grandfather?

Now who can say California Small Enomination Gold is not exciting and intriguing? Besides the collecting, there is so much to learn in the search for the, as yet, undiscovered and unknown. Have fun and let us know if you find any of the answers.

Round
California Gold Dollar
of 1857.

The only one of this date known.

Exceedingly Rare -

Samuel W. Condit owner -

"Sinite of Potassium" (Poison)
Dip a Gold Coin into it
for just a second, & it will
be as clean as minted -
S.W.C.

1857. Cal. Gold
Dollar, Round
Slightly worn
13 Stars on
Reverse -
(Elder's date)
Only known for
this date known

Cost 60.00

CALIFORNIA SMALL DENOMINATION GOLD
AUCTION SALES HISTORY
Jack Totheroh

The AUCTION SALES HISTORY is a compilation of the 25 highest sales prices for each of the 564 presently known varieties of California Small Denomination Gold. These records provide an historical reference for collectors desiring information relative to the varieties in which they have an interest. Nearly 12,000 entries have been made. All of the auctions listed in the Breen-Gillio, "California Pioneer Fractional Gold" bibliography, along with others prior to 1983 not listed, are included. Virtually all of the auction catalogs since 1983, with their prices realized, are a part of this Auction Sales History. Most of these sales have occurred from 1980 to date, but earlier dates are included when the number of entries is 25 or less. A sales price is not included when it is less than that of the top 25 prices for a particular variety.

The scarcity of these varieties readily becomes apparent when it is recognized that, presently, there are 30 varieties which have no record of an auction sale and 48 which have not been presented to P.C.G.S. for certification; 67 have from 1 to 5 sales; 81 from 6 to 10; 170 from 11 to 25; and 216 have 26 or more sales.

The order of the sort is determined by Date of Sale, Grade and Price Realized in ascending order. Two of these reports will be presented in each of the future Brasher Bulletin issues.

RARITY ratings are a revision of the Breen-Gillio ratings and are based upon four factors:

1. The number of a variety submitted to Professional Coin Grading Service for certification;
2. The number having been offered at auction;
3. Information included in the Breen-Gillio, "California Pioneer Fractional Gold";
4. Those coins known to be a part of collections which have not been certified.

Since 1983 more information has become available. In 1983 it was estimated that 12,000 California Small Denomination Gold coins existed; today the estimate is closer to 25,000. As a consequence, many of the variety ratings have been lowered - a few have been raised. Minor revisions have been made to the Breen-Gillio ratings table.

1. Rarity 9 is for those varieties considered unique. This rating is subject to change as more than one of a variety becomes known.
2. Rarity 5 and 5- have been combined as are rarity 4+, 4 and 4-.
3. Rarity 3 (201-500) has been added for the 19 varieties that meet that criterion. There were none so identified in 1983. All were then 4- rarity or above.

DESCRIPTION - a brief summary of a variety's characteristics (often more fully described in Breen-Gillio). The same is true for NOTES.

DATE, AUCTION HOUSE, COLLECTION and LOT # are self explanatory.

DIE STATE - included when it was identified by an auction house or was known to the recorder.

GRADE - assigned by the auction house or by P.C.G.S. Grading is quite subjective, particularly in the higher grades. Notice that on the B.G.701 Report the X-REF #1's were graded '50' and '63' and X-Ref #3's were graded '60' and '63'. In both cases the later gradings were P.C.G.S. ratings.

PRICE generally is derived from the prices realized. Price has been rounded off to the nearest dollar, except for the lower prices for earlier dates prior to 1980. 'Buy backs' are included only when they appear in the top 25. They are assigned a \$0 valuation. It is not possible to determine if a sale is a 'buy back' unless the auction house has so indicated. Prices with a \$.0 appear if the sales price has not been available and the number of entries is less than 25.

X-REF - multiple sales of the same coin when that relationship has been identified.

Any additions or suggestions you can make to these compilations will be welcomed. Updating is an ongoing process.

For those interested, all of the 564 variety reports are available at the following rates:

1 variety	- \$ 1.00
3 varieties	- \$ 2.50
5 "	- \$ 3.50
10 "	- \$ 6.00
20 "	- \$10.00
additional copies over 20 @.50	

Jack Totheroh
970 Terracina Drive
Santa Paula, CA 93060

CALIFORNIA SMALL DENOMINATION GOLD
Auction Sales History

BG #201 NO FRONTIER-DEVIERY ROUNDQUARTER RARITY 7+

DESCRIPTION

obv: Narrow head, 13 stars. 1st star below point of neck and doubled.
rev. 25 CENTS within wreath. Large triangular bow. the S is higher than the other letters in CENTS.

NOTES

Only six have been auctioned since 1978. Prior to 1970 descriptions did not distinguish between BG201 & 202. The rarity has been reduced from 8 to 7+

<u>DATE</u>	<u>AUCTION HOUSE</u>	<u>COLLECTION</u>	<u>LOT #</u>	<u>DIE ST.</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>X-REF</u>
01-10-92	BOWERS & MERENA	Texas	4129		50	\$4,180	1
09-25-88	SUPERIOR	Lee	14		50	\$3,960	1
09-20-85	PCAG	N.C.N.A. San	415		55	\$3,740	
07-30-94	HERITAGE	A.N.A. Dearborn,	7960		63	\$2,310	2
04-19-56	NEW NETHERLANDS	T. James Clarke	495		60	\$80	2
06-20-78	PINE TREE	Breen III Auction	1147		40	\$0.00	

BG #420 1853 DERIBERPE ROUNDHALF-DOLLAR RARITY 7

DESCRIPTION

Obv: 11 stars, D below bust; 1st star above and to left of bust point; 8th star touches middle of upper roll of bun.
Rev: CALIFORNIA GOLD HALF D around and outside of wreath, 1853 inside. Same as 417, 418, 419.

NOTES

9 auctioned. At least two were repeats. Only one has been graded by PCGS. It was a '60'.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>AUCTION HOUSE</u>	<u>COLLECTION</u>	<u>LOT #</u>	<u>DIE ST.</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>X-REF</u>
07-01-80	SOTHEBY	Otto III	317		45	\$2,300	
09-22-87	SUPERIOR	Cal-Neva	4442		60	\$1,100	1
01-10-92	BOWERS & MERENA	Texas	4330		60	\$825	1
08-19-95	HERITAGE	A.N.A. Anaheim	8692		20	\$825	
02-01-94	SUPERIOR	Rothenberger	2817		40	\$715	2
09-25-88	SUPERIOR	Lee	69		60	\$688	
10-01-89	SUPERIOR	Heifetz	62		40	\$253	2
05-17-83	COIN GALLERY	Mail Bid Sale	2420		65	\$242	
08-10-94		O'Connor			20	\$50	
04-01-57	NEW NETHERLANDS	Numisma F.P.L.	5112		60	\$14.50	

X-REF indicates multiple sales of the same coin. A missing duplicate pair number indicates other sale achieved price of less than top 25 prices realized.

Data compiled by R.J. TOTTEROH. Care has been taken, however accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

Auction Sales History

BG #801

1859 FRONTIER-DEVIERY ROUNDQUARTER

RARITY 4

DESCRIPTION

obv: Large crude head; 10 stars, 1st star above point of neck, 4th star away from hair on forehead.

rev: 1 4 DOLLAR 1859 within wreath, no fraction bar. The 1 in the fraction touches the top rim. The R in DOLLAR was repunched and is larger than the other letters.

NOTES

The X-Ref does not have matched pairs because the other half of the pairs fall below the top 25 in price rank. As is often the case the highest prices were in 1980.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>AUCTION HOUSE</u>	<u>COLLECTION</u>	<u>LOT #</u>	<u>DIE ST.</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>X-REF</u>
05-10-80	KRUEGER	Grafton	489		65	\$750	
08-18-80	IVY	A.N.A. Cincinnati	538		63	\$525	
08-02-80	KRUEGER	Chataway Bay	978		65	\$500	
02-20-91	KINGSWOOD	Dartmouth	7145		62	\$413	
02-01-94	SUPERIOR	Rothenberger	2878		45	\$352	
02-01-94	SUPERIOR	Rothenberger	2877		60	\$341	3
01-10-92	BOWERS & MERENA	Texas	4155		65	\$303	
11-14-90	BOWERS & MERENA	Schenkel	3507		65	\$303	
01-31-95	BUTTERFIELD	Hollywood	2828		64	\$275	
09-06-90	STACKS	Public Auction	990		63	\$275	
02-21-90	COIN GALLERY	Mail Bid Sale	3466		60	\$275	
02-18-97	SUPERIOR	Gainsborough II	2490		65	\$264	
10-07-90	SUPERIOR	October Sale	697		64	\$264	2
08-02-80	KRUEGER	Chataway Bay	977		60	\$260	
01-06-96	HERITAGE	F.U.N. Sale	7035		64	\$259	
11-15-80	NERCA	David K. Carnegie	1573		63	\$248	
03-27-92	BOWERS & MERENA	Spring Quartette	3530		63	\$242	
02-05-91	SUPERIOR	Mendelson	3123		61	\$242	1
09-01-87	SUPERIOR	Cal-Neva	3454		63	\$231	
05-30-95	SUPERIOR	May Auction	4017		63	\$220	
11-08-83	BOWERS & MERENA	Brand-1	655		63	\$220	
01-29-96	SUPERIOR	Edmunds	1940		64	\$209	
06-03-97	SUPERIOR	Heathgate	1291		64	\$204	
01-06-95	BOWERS & MERENA	Perry	3076		55	\$204	4
11-10-79	NERCA	N E. Fall Auction	1678		63	\$200	

X-REF indicates multiple sales of the same coin. A missing duplicate pair number indicates other sale achieved price of less than top 25 prices realized.

Data compiled by R.J. TOTTEROH. Care has been taken, however accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

Anthony Terranova has submitted this
to the membership for identification.



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

REGULAR	\$15.00 (\$10.00 Dues + \$5.00 initiation fee)
DEALER PATRON	\$200.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

Collecting Interest (optional): _____

21

IMPORTANT BREAKING NEWS UPDATE

We have held up shipping these bulletins to you to bring you up to date on two important events that have just occurred.

Pittman Auction Results

The John J. Pittman collection of Pioneer Gold was just sold October 23rd. Pittman concentrated on Bechtler coinage, and while not all pieces were of the highest quality a couple brought outstanding prices such as the \$2 1/2 67 G. 21c. K10 which was graded AU. The coin was original and prooflike and brought a record \$11,000 (including the 10% buyers charge). The extremely rare K21 \$5 C. Bechtler Georgia Gold with the colon before 22 brought a record \$24,200 to a prominent Georgia dealer. The coin was an XF specimen. The Pittman Collection contained both varieties of the proof restrike \$5 gold pieces; the K30 brought \$14,300 and K31 sold to a dealer for \$15,400.

Other highlights included a price realized of \$28,600 for a \$5 1849 Moffat & Co. piece described as extremely fine to AU, but believed by us to eventually be certified as an MS63 or MS64 holder. A Moffat & Co. \$20 1853 in mint state brought another record price \$21,900 and the Miner's Bank \$10 described as VF to XF, but clearly much nicer brought \$24,200. The Baldwin & Co. \$10 1850 Horseman although previously mounted and repaired was quiet attractive and brought \$21,900. An uncirculated Kellogg \$20 brought a record price of \$17,600.

Clearly the highlight of the Pittman Pioneer Gold collection was the unique 1855 Kellogg & Co. \$50 copper trial strike with a pedigree dating back to the late 1800's. This magnificent piece brought \$71,500.

For a complete listing of this sale you may contact:

David Akers Numismatic Inc., at P.O. Box 373, Stewart Florida, 34995-0373.

Finest Collection of Pioneer Gold

Kagin's of Tiburon, California, once again has purchased the largest and finest collection of Pioneer Gold consisting of some of the finest and rarest gold coins in existence. Some of the highlights-many of which are pedigreed to the Garrett, Carter, Kagin, and other famous collections- include:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| * Complete set of Templeton Reid | * Two F.D. Kohler ingots |
| * J.S. Ormsby & Co. \$10 | * Dunbar & Co. \$5 |
| * Pacific Co. \$5 | * Dubosq & Co. \$10 |
| * Shultz & Co. \$5 | * J.J. Conway & Co. \$2 1/2 |
| * Complete set of Oregon Exchange Co. | * The finest certified \$50 |
| * The finest known Proof \$50 Kellogg & Co. | Humbert slug |
| * Two Cincinnati Mining & Trading | * Complete set of Baldwin & Co. |
| Co. \$10 gold pieces | |

For a complete listing of all these coins, please write to: Kagin's at 98 Main St., Tiburon, CA, 94920 or e-mail at: www.kagin.com or call toll free 1-888-8kagins (888-852-4467).

UPCOMING EVENTS--CONTINUED

September

12-14 Draft Horse Classic and Harvest Festival--Grass Valley-- Includes draft horse driving shows and contests, all day horse events, living history demonstrations and a harvest festival displaying local produce and wines of Nevada County. (Nevada County Agricultural District Fair - 916 273-6217, fax 916 273-1146)

14 Living History Days at the Empire Mine--Grass Valley-- This entire historic area turns back to another time as volunteers become engineers, miners and other folks from the past who provide demonstrations, entertainment and, of course, refreshment. (Empire Mine State Historic Park - 916 273-8522, fax 916 273-0602)

18-21 Route 66 Rendezvous--San Bernardino-- This vintage automotive street fair commemorates the historic route used by Jedediah Smith in 1826 and includes good old fashioned California cruisin', exhibits and entertainment. (San Bernardino Convention & Visitors Bureau - 909 889-3980, fax 909 888-5998)



20 A Day of Living History--Paradise-- A re-creation of life on the Paradise Ridge 150 years ago that allows visitors to take part in the chores, crafts and recreation of yesteryear through demonstrations and hands-on activities, highlighting miners' vittles, apple pressing, bullet making, log cutting, blacksmithing, rope making and more. (Gold Nugget Days Inc. - 916 872-8722, fax 916 872-1050)

25-28 Siskiyou Balloon Faire--Siskiyou County-- Along with hot air balloon ascensions, this annual event features a craft fair and themed evening entertainment and events. (Siskiyou County Visitors Bureau - 916 842-7857 or 800 446-7475, fax 916 842-7666)

26-28 GoldFest at Ironstone Vineyards--Murphys-- This festival will combine education and entertainment through encampments, fine art exhibits, craft demonstrations, storytelling, fiddling and much more, all of which will serve to commemorate the diverse cultures and events of the Mother Lode's Gold Rush era. (Ironstone Vineyards - 209 728-1251, fax 209 728-1275)

October

4-5 Gold Rush Days--Coloma-- Living history demonstrations and entertainment surround the U.S. National Gold Panning Championships, which include a skill level for beginners so everyone can participate. (Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park - 916 622-3470, fax 916 622-3472)

14-18 California State Grange Annual Session--Modesto-- This annual session of the California State Grange, an active player in the agricultural development of California, covers topics ranging from agriculture to roads and highways, with family values and education also playing a prominent role. (California State Grange Order of Patrons of Husbandry - 916 454-5805, fax 916 739-8189)

25 Living History Days at the Empire Mine--Grass Valley-- This entire historic area turns back to another time as volunteers become engineers, miners and other folks from the past who provide demonstrations, entertainment and, of course, refreshment. (Empire Mine State Historic Park - 916 273-8522, fax 916 273-0602)

November

28-29 Holiday Open House at the Empire Mine--Grass Valley-- The Empire Cottage, a turn-of-the-century mansion beautifully restored and decorated in holiday finery, provides visitors with a glimpse of yesteryear. (Empire Mine State Historic Park - 916 273-8522, fax 916 273-0602)

28, December 5, 12, 19 Cornish Christmas Celebration--Grass Valley-- See historic downtown Grass Valley decorated for Christmas with street vendors dressed in period costume, music, art, food and entertainment by Cornish clogging dancers. (Grass Valley Downtown Association - 916 272-8315, fax 916 273-8696)

December

1-7 California's Access Gold Program--Statewide-- This is an educational program for the travel-tourism industry and small to mid-sized businesses and will, through satellite link-up, promote compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, increased tourism, and local support networks. (Accessible California - 619 279-0704, fax 619 279-5118)

2-21 Victorian Christmas at the Columbia City Hotel--Columbia-- This holiday dinner involves local actors, minstrels and guests in an evening filled with song, fine dining and wines, and a melodrama with a Christmas Gold Rush theme. (City Hotel Corporation - 209 532-1479, fax 209 532-7027)



14 Christmas in Coloma-- Coloma--Take a step back in time and experience a true Gold Rush Christmas with living history characters, arts and crafts, music, entertainment, food and much more. (Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park - 916 622-3470, fax 916 622-3472)

For a complete listing of Sesquicentennial events or for more information, please contact us at:

**914 Capitol Mall, Room 217
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 653-9599**

Kagins
98 Main St. #201
Tiburon, CA 94920

19 1997 NORTH BAY CA 949 NOV

1978

Mr. Wayne Homren
1810 Antietam St.
Pittsburgh PA 15206